

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS AND
JANICE HAHN

October 1, 2019

Stemming the Rise in Hate and Violence

This summer, the mass shootings in Gilroy (California), El Paso (Texas), and Dayton (Ohio), shocked our nation and had a devastating impact on those communities. Hate and bigotry were also a common thread running through these horrific acts of violence, contributing to the ongoing national rise in hate crimes (see reports from Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism).

Los Angeles County (County), despite its extraordinary cultural diversity and predominance of positive intergroup relations, is also experiencing growth in hate and conflict. On August 23, 2019, a violent incident, apparently motivated by brazen and open prejudice, targeted transgender Latinx women and is currently being investigated as a potential hate crime that occurred in the City of Los Angeles. There has also been a rise in bullying and harassment in schools targeting children, especially as mass media highlights the Federal Administration’s anti-immigrant, scapegoating statements and policies that disregard basic human rights and needs. The UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access published “School and Society in the Age of Trump,” a survey of

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500-plus high school principals about the ways their school communities were experiencing social incivility and division. Based on the 2017-18 school year, the study found that more than eight in ten principals “report that their students have made derogatory remarks about other racial or ethnic groups.” More than 60 percent said students had “made derogatory remarks about immigrants.”

The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (LACCHR) found that hate crimes in the County rose 32% over the past four years, based on its study analyzing all the hate crimes reported each year. And even though hate crimes are notoriously underreported according to annual U.S. Justice Department surveys, there were over 500 hate crimes in LA County reported in 2017, averaging more than one each day.

The County must take action against this rise in hate and violence, and protect vulnerable communities that are experiencing acts of hate-motivated hostility, whether or not they violate criminal laws. These acts of bias-driven hostility can violate one’s civil rights under state and federal law; and when left unchecked, they contribute to an atmosphere conducive to hate crime. Building community capacity to quickly and effectively respond to hate is not only critical to protecting the basic human rights and needs of our disadvantaged communities, but it is necessary to avoid the social and monetary costs resulting from increased hate violence, intergroup conflict, and tensions.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) unanimously passed a motion on July 17, 2018, entitled “Protecting Vulnerable Communities from Hate Crime.” Among other things, the motion directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), working with Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS)/ LACCHR, to report back on the creation of a multi-year campaign and program to:

- 1) unite communities against hate;

- 2) urge and facilitate reporting of both hate crimes and bias-motivated hostility, such as angry rants, bullying, and harassment, by providing multiple ways to report; and
- 3) build the capacity of communities to help those individuals and communities through training and networks.

The community-based assistance could also be in the form of counseling, support, conflict resolution assistance, reconciliation, healing strategies, and access to other needed resources. Assistance can also be working with local governments, law enforcement agencies, and school districts to respond more visibly by standing with the targeted person and communities and changing laws, policies, and practices to prevent the spread of hate. The motion also required the analysis of the reported hate crimes and acts to help inform prevention and intervention strategies.

The Board has previously worked to ensure that County agencies and partner organizations work together to deter and swiftly respond to threats and acts of hate. In December 2015, following a horrific terrorist attack in Paris, France and another in San Bernardino, California, the Board unanimously passed a motion requesting that the District Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Department (LASD), Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee (CCJCC), and LACCHR increase their outreach to Muslims, Sikhs, South Asians, and other groups most often targeted for hate crime following acts of terror. To support this process, CCJCC established a Task Force on Hate Crime Outreach and Response in January 2016 to promote inter-agency coordination and sharing of best practices to reduce and respond to hate crimes.

A report by the County's Office of the Inspector General issued on April 1, 2019 undertook a comprehensive review of LASD's hate crimes policies, training, practices, and procedures, and set forth specific recommendations that should be implemented in order to bring each of these up-to-date and consistent with best practices and model policies.

The County appropriated \$500,000 in funds in October 2018 to implement the July 2018 Board motion, specifically the multi-year, anti-hate campaign/community response program ("Anti-Hate Initiative") by WDACS/LACCHR detailed above. The Board recognizes the advances that WDACS/LACCHR have made to build and launch the Anti-Hate Initiative to date, which include:

- The use of a part-time retiree to lay the foundation for the Anti-Hate Initiative in FY 2018-19. WDACS/LACCHR plan to hire a full-time Project Director and Senior Human Relations Consultant using existing funding and vacancies to lead implementation in the coming months, and will work with the CEO to request two permanent positions in the FY 2020-21 budget process.
- Secured additional resources from the Quality and Productivity Commission and the Department of Mental Health.
- Contracted with 211 LA County for 24-hour/7-days-a-week multilingual capacity to receive and assist callers reporting acts of hate.
- Obtained commitments from numerous County and nonprofit agencies to be part of the network of response and support of individuals and communities experiencing acts of hate.

- Worked with the County Department of Public Health to develop hate violence prevention strategies as part of the newly-formed Office of Violence Prevention.

The Board recognizes that in order to stem the rising tide of hate in Los Angeles County, we must take further action to enable the full implementation of this urgently needed Anti-Hate Initiative.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in coordination with WDACS/LACCHR, to enter into agreements with one or more consultants, as needed, to assist with the implementation of the Anti-Hate Initiative (AHI), including but not limited to the AHI's countywide marketing and outreach campaign and community capacity building and response-to-hate services and support.
2. Direct WDACS/LACCHR to report back in 120 days on the status of developing and launching the Anti-Hate Initiative, including the outreach campaign and community capacity-building program.
3. Request that the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CCJCC), in coordination with WDACS/LACCHR and CEO, work with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and criminal justice agencies in Los Angeles County to build upon the *Best Practice Recommendations for Law Enforcement Agencies* developed by CCJCC's Task Force on Hate Crime Outreach and Response in 2016, and report back in 180 days on updated strategies for preventing and responding to acts of hate, which would include at a minimum those areas outlined

below, many of which were identified in the Report issued by the Office of the Inspector General (April 2019):

- a. Build and maintain ongoing relationships with leaders of communities and institutions whose members have been targeted for hate in the past (for example, Latino immigrants, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh institutions, LGBTQ, African Americans, etc.) in order to:
 - i) effectively address the unique needs and fears of vulnerable communities in reporting hate crime through the utilization of linguistically and culturally appropriate methods and messages;
 - ii) convey the importance of reporting hate crimes by providing to victims and communities with an up-to-date brochure on hate crimes, per state penal code section 422.92; and
 - iii) communicate the policies and practices of the agencies that ensure protection from crime is provided regardless of immigration status;
- b. Promptly and thoroughly investigate as a possible hate crime any crime that has any marker of bias motivation, utilizing a hate crimes investigations' checklist, and keep victims and communities updated regularly and in a timely manner;
- c. Incorporate training on understanding and reducing implicit biases and their impact on fair policing in both academy and in-service training, developed and conducted by a subject matter expert;
- d. Review the requirements set forth in California Assembly Bill 1985 and take actions to achieve compliance with those requirements;

- e. Arrange for detectives and other investigating officers to regularly undergo recently updated training by the California Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission (POST), Los Angeles County District Attorney, WDACS/LACCHR, and other qualified providers, to improve the recognition and investigation of hate crimes for all law enforcement agencies in the County;
 - f. Alert in a timely fashion the local government, the County and local human relations commission, and/or other relevant organizations of hate crimes and incidents when they are reported, so that they may take actions to support the targeted person(s) and the affected community, as well as engage in change efforts to prevent further hate incidents; and
 - g. Work with prosecutors, courts, and other stakeholder organizations with subject matter expertise to develop and implement strategies to ensure that hate crime defendants can be placed into alternative sentencing programs and/or other educational and experiential programs, when appropriate, that effectively reduce the likelihood of recidivism.
4. Direct the CEO and the County's Legislative Advocates in Sacramento to support legislation that would strengthen law enforcement training, reporting, and prosecution of hate crimes.

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CATEGORIES: (Please check those that apply)

- 1. Child Welfare
- 2. Community and Youth Empowerment
- 3. County Services
- 4. Economic Justice
- 5. Economic and Workforce Development
- 6. Education
- 7. Environment
- 8. Fiscal
- 9. Governance
- 10. Health
- 11. Homelessness
- 12. Immigration
- 13. Public Safety
- 14. Social Justice and Human Rights
- 15. Technology and Data
- 16. Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy
- 17. Legislation
- 18. Parks and Open Space
- 19. Planning/Land Use
- 20. Transportation
- 21. Veterans